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Delaware Recognizes the 4th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day

Wilmington, DE – Today, the Delaware Attorney General's Office commended Governor Jack Markell for issuing a Proclamation in recognition of the 4th Annual World Elder Abuse Awareness Day in Delaware. Citizens are urged to wear purple today to commemorate Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

"Last year, nearly 1,000 of Delaware's elderly or disabled citizens were known victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation," stated Patricia Dailey Lewis, Family Division Director. "Researchers estimate that four times that number of victims exist but do not report being abused, neglected, or exploited. This Proclamation makes clear that these victims can have a voice and a place to turn."

According to the American Bar Association's Commission on Domestic Violence, one to two million Americans, age sixty-five and older, have been injured, exploited, or otherwise mistreated by a family member, a professional in a position of trust, or an opportunistic stranger. Victims are often hesitant to report mistreatment for a variety of reasons, including the fear of retaliation, risk of losing the love and care of a family member, or belief that they may be placed in a nursing home.

In September 2008, Attorney General Joseph R. Biden, III, formed the Senior Protection Initiative at the Delaware Department of Justice to help end elder abuse. This initiative, led by Deputy Attorney General Marsha White, uses a multi-disciplinary team dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of these abuses. In addition, the Team partners with a variety of Delaware social service and financial organizations as well as law enforcement and first responders to promote the awareness, recognition and reporting of elder abuse and exploitation.

For more information on this Initiative and other elder abuse resources, please visit attorneygeneral.delaware.gov. If you suspect that an elderly or disabled person is being abused, neglected, or exploited, please call the Delaware Attorney General's Office at (800)220-5424, Delaware Health and Social Services at (800) 223-9074 or 911.

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